

# Halifax metro

**INTERVIEW**  
Yann Martel's new novel  
explores life after loss  
**metroLIFE**



Your essential daily news | THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2016

High 11°C/Low 3°C Rain  

From left: Raghed Diab, Ibrahim Al Nasan, Shady Al Masalmy and Shahd Al Nasan play at the bubble room at the Discovery Centre on Wednesday.

JEFF HARPER/METRO



## 'HAPPY AND SAFE'

**Syrian refugees show gratitude after settling into life in Halifax**

**metroNEWS**

# Educating by live-tweeting 911 calls

## EMERGENCY

### RCMP in Nova Scotia taking to social media site Friday



**Haley Ryan**  
Metro | Halifax

The provincial RCMP will be live-tweeting 911 calls to educate people about properly using the service, but it's unlikely they'll all show up online.

From 8 to 11 p.m. on Friday, a sampling of the calls will be shared through the Mounties' Twitter account @RCMPNS, with the hashtag #CopCallsNS.

"That hopefully gives us a more effective 911 system and also provides some insight into

the important role of personnel," Nova Scotia RCMP spokesman Cpl. Andrew Joyce said Wednesday.

"It's exciting for us because we've never done it before."

Joyce said all calls go through the OCC (operational communication centre) before dispatchers alert the right emergency responders whether that means police, paramedics, fire or others.

Although Joyce said they will

try to "keep up" with calls as they come in, police don't expect to tweet "every single one, that's for sure."

People calling 911 don't usually expect their emergency to be voiced across the web, Joyce said, so the calls will be screened to ensure details shared are no risk to public safety, won't jeopardize an investigation, or violate someone's privacy.

Names, addresses and iden-

tifying details won't be shared, Joyce added.

"We're going to be as informative as we can."

Through the evening, the RCMP will share tips on the right way to use 911, respond to questions, and give an insight into the tough job dispatchers have, Joyce said.

"One of the things that bogs down our system, makes it less efficient, is certainly non-emer-

gency calls into 911," Joyce added.

"If we can provide some insight to the public to what would be considered emergency, what may not be, that's also our goal."

### 911 ON TWITTER

Visit @RCMPNS and watch for #CopCallsNS from 8-11 p.m. on Friday.



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# Surgeons using lasers to target oral cancers

## HEALTH

### Procedure cuts recovery down to three to five days: Doctors

Facing a growing epidemic of throat and mouth cancer caused by HPV, Halifax doctors are refining a surgical technique that uses lasers to remove tumours — avoiding the standard practice of cracking open a patient's jaw.

"We are trying to remove it through the mouth using scopes, said Dr. Matt Rigby, a head and neck surgeon at the QEII Health Sciences Centre. "So that actually exposes the tumour at the back of the tongue which you can't see easily by direct line of sight."

Rigby said the advantage for the patient is that the surgery avoids the traditional method of splitting the jaw bone to operate in difficult-to-reach areas, while cutting recovery time down to three to five days, as opposed to 10 days to two weeks for conventional surgery.

"We not only want a cure, but the best standard of life after a cure," he said.

The Halifax hospital is the only one in Canada that uses trans-oral laser microsurgery, and is one of only a handful in North America. It was first brought to Halifax by Dr. Mark Taylor in 2002.



**Dr. Matthew Rigby**, a head and neck surgeon at the QEII Health Sciences Centre treats aggressive throat and mouth cancer caused by HPV using lasers. The conventional method necessitates cracking patients' jaws, followed by a two-week recovery period. ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS



**We not only want a cure, but the best standard of life after a cure.**

**Dr. Matthew Rigby**

Rigby said surgical advances and more research will be key in dealing with a more than 200 per cent increase in mouth and throat cancers caused by HPV over the last 20 years.

Dr. Rob Hart, also a head and

neck surgeon in Halifax, has been researching specific cellular mechanisms that may be causing the throat and mouth cancers. His research team is looking for pathways to interrupt the development of the

cancers.

"Why do some people who get an HPV infection develop a cancer and others don't? We don't know the answer to that."

Hart said what's known is that there has been a massive shift from traditional causes such as heavy smoking and drinking to HPV-related cancers. The ratio is now 80 per cent related to HPV and 20 per cent to other causes.

He said there are about 5,000 to 6,000 new oral cancer cases in Canada each year, with 150 to 200 of them in Nova Scotia.

Currently about seven per cent of sexually active adults have an oral HPV infection, while between 65 and 100 per cent of sexually active adults will be exposed to the virus.

Most however, will clear the virus from their systems and will show few to no symptoms as long as they have it.

Hart said any link to oral sex in particular is a "supposition" at this point.

"We know that people who have more sexual partners have higher risk of HPV infection but, pretty much anybody who is sexually active will have had some exposure at some point in their life. Oral to oral contact is probably as important as oral to genital contact."

Both Hart and Rigby say it's hoped vaccine programs in young girls and boys will help curb the rapid rise in HPV-related cancers, projected to be half of all throat and mouth cancers by 2030.

Hart said the statistics haven't hit the "peak of the curve" yet.

"It will flatline and then as the vaccinated cohort moves forward we hope to see it tail off substantially," said Hart. "But I think we are probably 30 years before we know whether it makes a difference."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

## DOUBLE STABBING

### Police charge 4 suspects



**Haley Ryan**  
Metro | Halifax

Four people, including a 16-year-old male, face charges in connection with a recent Dartmouth stabbing.

At about 2:30 a.m. Tuesday, Halifax Regional Police said a patrol officer was walking in the 0-100 block of Primrose Street when he was approached by a citizen asking for help who said two people had been stabbed in a nearby residence.

Officers responded and found a 49-year-old man and 18-year-old man both suffering from stab wounds to their extremities, a police release on Wednesday said.

They were taken to hospital for treatment of non-life threatening injuries and have since been released.

A 16-year-old boy has been charged with two counts of assault with a weapon, two counts of assault with a weapon causing bodily harm, two counts of robbery, break and enter, and possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose. He is scheduled to appear in Halifax provincial youth court Wednesday morning.

Christopher Steven Slaunwhite and Natasha Irene Lee White, both 20, and 24-year-old Theodore Payne St. Onge have all been charged with two counts of assault with a weapon, two counts of assault with a weapon causing bodily harm, two counts of robbery, break and enter and two counts of possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose.

## CRIME

### Robbery suspect arrested

Police have arrested a man allegedly involved in a Tuesday night convenience store robbery in Middle Sackville. At about 9:30 p.m. police responded to a call about a robbery in progress after a man entered the store and demanded several items before he fled the scene.

Police later found a male matching his description not far from the store. The accused faces charges of robbery and wearing a disguise with intent, and was scheduled to appear in court Wednesday. METRO

## EASTERN PASSAGE

### Restaurant owner faces backlash for staff comments



**Emma's Eatery**, FACEBOOK

A Halifax-area restaurant owner has sparked a social media uproar by complaining that a "frustrating new generation" of employees with a poor work ethic has helped kill her business.

A Facebook post Tuesday from Kim Stacey, owner of the now-defunct Emma's Eatery in Eastern Passage, cites several reasons for the closure — but much of the online jousting has been over her decision to highlight what she describes as the entitled attitude of young staff members.

In her post, Stacey complains that during the nine years the eatery was open, young employ-

ees demanded to be "paid dearly" for working shifts that did not interfere with their social activities, hobbies and cellphone use.

Aside from her challenges with indolent employees, Stacey says her business was hurt by insufficient traffic, "suffocating bureaucracy," expensive locally sourced food, exploitative landlords and elitist financial institutions.

At one point in the heated online debate, Stacey stressed that not all of her employees have been duds, saying some were "highly disciplined and committed for many years."

Amid the hundreds of passionate responses — most of which bemoan the loss of the restaurant and its delectable fish cakes — Stacey is simultaneously condemned for slandering an entire generation and celebrated for telling it as it is.

More than a few on Facebook took Stacey to task for her views, arguing she has only herself to blame for making bad choices when hiring.

"That was your own poor judgment and in no way reflects an entire cohort of people," said one woman. "I worked at two jobs to put myself through university,

and I have lots of friends that did the same, or are still doing so."

Reached by phone, Stacey said some of her employees' expectations were too high.

"It's gotten to the point where they actually think that I'm their family and that they are entitled to come and go whenever they want," she said. "I've noticed a huge difference in the last four or five years."

She said the problem may stem from a school system that refuses to acknowledge failure, or from parents that keep their kids too busy with planned activities. THE CANADIAN PRESS



# Debt strategy likely to continue

## FINANCE

## Committee of whole passes proposed HRM budget



**Zane Woodford**  
Metro | Halifax

The municipality continues to consider taking on more debt, but on Wednesday, Halifax regional council's committee of the whole voted to stay the course for now.

The committee voted to approve the proposed budget for the fiscal and consolidated accounts department, and adopted recommendations

from staff on a review of Halifax Regional Municipality's debt strategy.

The first maintains the status quo for now. In 2009, the municipality sought to get its fiscal house in order by implementing a debt strategy that reduced how much it owes annually by three per cent per household.

That strategy has been working well, and in 2015-16, the debt is expected to drop to about \$250 million — the lowest it's been since amalgamation, and a decrease

of nearly \$100 million since 1999.

The second recommendation is to direct staff to come up with a business plan for creating a \$10 million Strategic Infrastructure Reserve using existing funds. That money could be used to service a debt of \$75 million taken on to pay for infrastructure projects.

Ahead of promised infrastructure stimulus funding from the federal government, this would allow the city to pay for one-third of a \$225

million project along with the other two levels of government.

Coun. Tim Outhit was happy to hear that the money wouldn't be used for things like road maintenance.

"I was very worried a few months ago that we were going to start increasing our debt to fix potholes, and that's not what I'm hearing today and I'm pleased with that," he said during Wednesday's meeting.

"But I do think there may be a time, as there has been in the past, to look at raising our debt."

A decision on whether to create the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve will likely be made before the 2016-17 budget is finalized.



**I do think there may be a time, as there has been in the past, to look at raising our debt.**

Coun. Tim Outhit



Halifax City Hall METRO FILE



Newly minted Harbourview-Burnside-Dartmouth East councillor Tony Mancini shows off his Montreal Canadiens cufflinks as he speaks to city council after being sworn in Wednesday at Halifax City Hall. JEFF HARPER/METRO

## SWEARING-IN

## 'It is an honour to be here today': Mancini

Tony Mancini's 93-year-old mother came to city hall on Wednesday to see her son sworn in as the municipality's newest regional councillor.

"It is an honour to be here today, and I was thinking about what kind of councillor I want to be," Mancini said from his new seat on Halifax regional council.

"I want to be a councillor that is well-informed and understands the facts and the information before making a decision or making an opinion."

He gave a tongue-in-cheek example about second-guessing his decision to wear his Montreal Canadiens cufflinks, given Coun. David Hendsbee's love for the Boston Bruins.

"Once again (Tuesday night) my Habs lost, and they do suck," he said.

"But I also noted that Coun. Hendsbee's team lost to — of all

teams — the Leafs, so in making my decision, I did wear my favourite cufflinks."

After the boos from Hendsbee subsided, Mancini thanked his friends and family for their support during the campaign, and the "transition week" he had after being elected.

He said at times he was questioning his decision to run for council, but a speech from the mayor at a breakfast changed his mind.

"This is the right decision, to change careers after 48 years, and to come and work with all of you," he said.

ZANE WOODFORD/METRO



**I look forward to the opportunity.**

Coun. Tony Mancini

## CITY POLITICS

## Councillor questions police cost-cutting

A Halifax regional councillor is concerned about direction given to the city's police department to trim its budget.

Halifax Regional Police Chief Jean-Michel Blais presented his \$76.7 million proposed 2016-17 budget to council's committee of the whole Wednesday, asking for about \$321,000 less than last year.

The savings come from an airport security contract that allows the department to hire more officers and spend less money, along with retirements and a contribution to the department from the reserve

fund, among other savings.

Coun. Gloria McCluskey isn't so concerned about how the department saved the money, but rather why it did so.

"Were you given an order to cut your budget?" she asked during Wednesday's meeting. Blais asked her to clarify.

"Were you given an envelope by somebody saying, 'reduce your budget?'"

"There was no envelope per se, but there was a request to be able to reduce the budget," Blais replied. "All business units went through that process."

That request presumably

**\$321,000**

The reduction in the Halifax Regional Police budget from last year's.

came from former CAO Richard Butts.

McCluskey cited the Nova Scotia Police Act, which she interprets to say that the police board alone should determine the department's budget.

"Nobody else is to give you direction," she said.

Blais agreed.

"I just wanted to clarify that, because that is wrong," she said.

Later in the meeting, Blais downplayed the effect of a reduced budget on policing in Halifax Regional Municipality.

"Will it affect service? Yes, it will affect service," he said. "It will positively affect service."

A finalized version of the budget will go back to the board of police commissioners for its approval, and then be included in the municipality's overall budget for final approval.

ZANE WOODFORD/METRO

## ECONOMY

## Aging population to impact labour force

A recently released Halifax economic report suggests that while 2015 was a positive year overall for the local economy, the effects of population aging are now being felt.

The Halifax Partnership provided its January 2016 Halifax Economic Snapshot, a quarterly report highlighting the city's key economic indicators, challenges and opportunities.

"The effects of population aging can now be seen clearly in the Halifax labour force, a

trend that is expected to continue for 10-15 years, tightening the labour force and putting increasing fiscal pressure on tax payers," the Halifax Partnership stated in a press release.

The report stated the Halifax economy had a strong finish to 2015, with growth across many sectors including shipbuilding, construction and the service sector. It also noted gains were expected in manufacturing and construction that will drive a stronger labour market. METRO



# ‘Words would never be able to express our gratitude’: Mother

## SYRIAN REFUGEES

**Families grateful they are ‘happy and safe’ in this city**



**Yvette d'Entremont**  
Metro | Halifax

A trip to Halifax's Discovery Centre is something many families would take for granted.

But for a group of Syrian refugee women who all arrived in Canada within the last two weeks, a simple family trip Wednesday was an experience to be treasured.

“Being in Canada means we are very relaxed and comfortable and not afraid. Our children are happy and safe, and we know when they go out, they will come back,” said Mayssoun, who arrived in Canada with her husband and seven children on Jan. 16.

“We would also like to be sure to thank the prime minister of Canada for welcoming us and for all he did and has done for us to be here. For



**Abdurrahman Elajuni holds Aburrahman Almsalma as he rides on a bike that lights up a skeleton at the Discovery Centre on Wednesday.** JEFF HARPER/METRO

what he did for us that other Arab countries did not.”

Speaking through Halifax interpreter Bassima Jurdak-O'Brien, the women didn't want to be photographed or

appear on camera. But they agreed to be interviewed and give their first names.

Chatting as a group, they expressed their gratitude, their eyes shining and their faces lighting up as they spoke. All four are mothers and said what they appreciated most about being in Halifax was the fact their children were safe and would be educated.

Another mother, also



**Shayma Al Nasan, left, and her sister Ranim dust for dinosaur bones during a field trip to the Discovery Centre on Wednesday.** JEFF HARPER/METRO

named Mayssoun, arrived in Halifax from Montreal on Jan. 16 with her husband and five children. She is two months pregnant.

As she watched her children enjoying themselves during Wednesday's Discovery Centre outing, she said the difference

between Syria and Canada was “huge.” She wanted to thank the Canadian people for their “beautiful hearts” and for welcoming them.

“The people here are very, very respectful, and no matter what we say words would never be able to express our

gratitude because the welcoming exceeded any expectations,” she said.

The Discovery Centre outing was one of many ongoing activities organized for Syrian refugees by the Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia.

**“I hope that God will allow us to ... give back to your society the way you have given to us.”**

Mayssoun, Syrian refugee and mother of five

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# Time for Burnside Connector now: Lobby

## HIGHWAYS

### Businesses say Infrastructure focus a plus

The Greater Burnside Business Association is pulling no punches when it comes to getting the long-awaited Burnside Connector completed.

On Jan. 12, the advocacy group in Burnside sent a letter

to Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Geoff MacLellan pointing out the "extraordinary opportunity" to get this project started, given the federal government's focus on infrastructure projects.

"We recognize the pivotal importance of this roadway for the future of continued, lasting business growth for the area," wrote GBBA Vice President Derek Brett. "Yet,

we also feel that more than sufficient time has passed for talk — it is finally time for real action."

The project has been on the books since 1992 and was included in the province's 2015-16 Highway Plan released by the province in 2014. Progress has been held up by negotiations over land acquisitions, environmental assessments and other bureaucratic issues.

The minister said he appre-

ciates the association's frustration.

"We certainly appreciate the points being raised by GBBA," said MacLellan. "The Burnside Connector is a priority for us, there's no doubt about it."

The mega-project would cost more than \$100-million. It was discussed in the House of Commons on Dec. 8 when Dartmouth-Cole Harbour MP Darren Fisher raised the subject of infrastructure spending.

Infrastructure Canada said it was continuing to work with the province on applications for infrastructure funding.

"Infrastructure Canada received a request from the Province of Nova Scotia for funding toward the Burnside Connector project, and is currently reviewing the proposal," the department wrote in an email.

The Burnside Connector, along with several other highways throughout the province,

has been included in the toll feasibility set to get under way this summer. MacLellan noted it would be premature to provide a timeline for the project's completion.

"I'd be delighted to provide a date but we don't have one at this point," he said. "We're working hard on this. It's not slipping away and we won't wait another decade to get it done."

JOHN BRANNEN/TC MEDIA



The Nova Scotia/New Brunswick border is still toll-free. TC MEDIA

## CUMBERLAND COUNTY

### Border town breathes sigh of relief on tolls

Elizabeth Smith McCrossin feels Cumberland County has dodged a bullet with New Brunswick's decision not to toll its highways, at least not yet.

The owner of Manasseh Market and Damaris Spa and Wellness Centre in downtown Amherst says many businesspeople are breathing a sigh of relief they won't see tolls at both ends of Cumberland County. She hopes the decision leads to more co-operation between the two provinces.

"It's good news there won't be tolls at the border, I think it would have been disastrous for us," Smith-McCrossin said. "It is unfortunate that the government there chose to further tax the people of New Brunswick with an increase in the HST. They are also seeing an increase in corporate tax."

"The solution for balancing the government's books cannot always be increasing taxes. People are paying enough."

While it floated the possibility of implementing highway tolls, New Brunswick chose instead to increase the HST by two per cent when it brought its provincial budget down Tuesday afternoon.

The province was looking at three models for highway tolls — one of which was at the four-

lane highway entrances to New Brunswick, including at Aulac.

Smith-McCrossin sees New Brunswick's decision as an opening for the three Maritime provinces to work together to promote business growth.

"A strong economy will generate a healthy tax base and we can afford the social programs we have come to expect as Canadians," Smith-McCrossin said.

PC leader and Cumberland South MLA Jamie Baillie said he's relieved, but stressed the fight isn't over.

“

**It's important that we continue our vigilance.**

PC leader Jamie Baillie, MLA Cumberland South

"What we've learned is our premier won't stick up for us when these things come up and that impression is going to take a long time to go away," Baillie said. "We know the New Brunswick government is going to continue considering it so it's important that we continue our vigilance."

Baillie said the Maritime provinces need to work together to find ways to lower the cost of living. Instead of tolls and higher taxes, Baillie said the three premiers should begin a dialog that would lower cost for business.

Amherst and Sackville representatives were scheduled to meet Tuesday night to discussion their joint opposition to the highway toll.

DARRELL COLE/TC MEDIA

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## SUPREME COURT

**Barrett implied killing McKinnon: Witness**

A former girlfriend of accused murderer Tom Barrett told a Supreme Court trial Wednesday while he never openly said he killed someone, he did make certain gestures suggesting he had.

Ashley MacDonald said when the topic of Brett McKinnon was raised, Barrett used a hand-wringing motion, implying McKinnon had been strangled.

"He never came out and said it," said MacDonald, when questioned by prosecu-

tor Kathryn Pentz. She said she began dating Barrett when she was 16. They shared two children and a drug habit.

"I would use any opi-ate I could get my hands on," said MacDonald, adding she's been drug-free for only a couple of weeks.



**Tom Barrett**  
TC MEDIA

Barrett, 40, is charged with the second-degree murder of McKinnon, who was reported missing in 2006. Her skeletal remains were found in 2008. The cause of death is unknown.

Another Crown witness has testified Barrett admitted to strangling McKinnon because she had stolen drugs from him.

In cross-examination, defence lawyer Brian Bailey pressed MacDonald on her criminal record, but she said she couldn't remember specific

charges, dates and times.

"I don't sit here and remember all the wrong things I did in my life. I don't think about it every day," she testified.

Bailey also asked why MacDonald would file police complaints against Barrett and then later change her story in court.

MacDonald admitted to lying in a bid to "protect my man."

"All I wanted to do was drop the charges because we had gotten back together," she said.

TC MEDIA



**NSGEU President Joan Jessome** JEFF HARPER/METRO FILE

**Union slams youth home**

## COMHLA CRUINN

**Unsafe sex, drugs, assault all alleged**

Allegations of assaults, unsafe sexual activity and illicit drug use have surfaced at a youth group home in Cape Breton, prompting a union leader to call for a review and improved security.

Joan Jessome, president of the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union, issued a statement Wednesday saying youth workers at the co-ed Comhla Cruinn Youth Centre have complained they don't feel safe in the residence.

"The centre is plagued with drugs and residents returning who are obviously under the influence of unknown substances ... and there are no protocols in place for proper monitoring," the statement says.

"There are sex acts occurring among residents, and when reported to management, staff members are directed to simply observe."

The home provides shelter to eight people aged 12 to 18, and is the responsibility of the provincial Department of Community Services.

The acting minister, Geoff MacLellan, said the government has dispatched a team

**+ COMPLAINTS****Other union allegations:**

- Staff are directed not to use words like "violence" when preparing reports, so as to avoid attention in Freedom of Information requests.
- Residents are often out all hours of the night even though some are under court-imposed curfews.
- Residents are never searched upon return.
- Staff have been told not to call police too often.
- There are no requirements to attend school or do chores.

to the centre to investigate the allegations and talk to police.

"These allegations are very serious and concerning for us," he said in an interview. "We want to take a very close look and understand what's happening there. Health and safety are the main priorities."

MacLellan said he couldn't comment on the specific allegations until the review was completed.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

**WINDSOR****Fire displaces 7 residents**

At least seven people were displaced by a fire early Wednesday that extensively damaged a four-unit apartment building in Windsor, N.S.

The blaze also forced the precautionary evacuation of two adjacent structures, including the Windsor

House assisted-living complex.

The fire at 10 Wentworth Rd. was reported shortly after 1 a.m.

Evacuees initially were taken to a church hall across the street, with help from staff of the assisted-living home, firefighters and the RCMP.

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# Needs of refugees growing

## SYRIAN CRISIS

### Government-assisted groups will face more issues: Analysis

As the Liberal government's target date to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees inches ever closer, a government analysis of those who've already arrived paints a sobering picture of the resettlement challenge ahead.

Data obtained by The Canadian Press shows that government-assisted refugees have more children, lower language skills and lower education levels compared with those being resettled by private groups.

Here's a look at what it found, and some of the implications for resettlement providers.

#### ■ Bigger families

53 per cent of approved cases listed five to eight people on the application, raising concerns for the current housing crunch. It's harder to find apartments to accommodate that many people within available



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau greets refugee families who recently arrived in Canada at an open house of the Masjid Al-Salaam Mosque in Peterborough, Ont., Sunday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

budgets.

#### ■ They're younger

55 per cent of approved applicants were 14 years of age or younger, compared with 27 per cent of privately sponsored ones. Services directly targeted at children will need to be stepped up.

#### ■ Language barriers

67 per cent of approved applicants reported speaking neither English or French. In some cities, wait lists for language training are over a year long.

#### ■ Lower education levels

Anecdotal reports suggest the average level of schooling for adult Syrian government-assisted refugees is six to nine

years. Of cases coming from Jordan, 90 to 95 per cent have not finished high school. The report notes that many kids are also a year or two behind their peers, putting new demands on the school system.

#### ■ They're generally healthy

The brief says the health of refugees runs from entirely

## SECURITY

### U.S. senators probing Canada's refugee plan

The U.S. Senate committee for homeland security is studying the implications for U.S. security from Canada's refugee program. The committee is hearing from two Canadians who have criticized the Trudeau government's refugee plan, including a representative of U.S. border guards who says the border is porous and needs more guards and a trade expert.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

healthy to those with severe diseases such as cancer. But only 12 per cent of the medical assessments had at least one condition listed. The most common were hypertension, diabetes and vision or hearing impairment. Mental health issues have also been known to arise soon or several months after arrival in Canada. THE CANADIAN PRESS

## ELECTORAL REFORM

### Fair vote threatens system: Senator

The federal Liberal government was warned Wednesday that its plans to overhaul Canada's electoral system could wind up plunging the country into constitutional wrangling — a spectre Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has vowed to avoid.

Sen. Serge Joyal, an independent Liberal and acknowledged constitutional authority, said adopting some form of proportional representation could make majority governments less likely and require two or more parties to come together to form less stable minority or coalition governments.

That in turn could necessitate clarification of the Governor General's prerogative to decide which party leader becomes prime minister and, if a coalition collapses, when to dissolve Parliament.

And, Joyal noted, any change to the Governor General's powers would require a constitutional amendment approved by all 10 provinces.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

## OTTAWA

### Man facing sex-crime charges



Joe Lofaro  
Metro | Ottawa

An Elvis impersonator from Ottawa is accused of multiple sex crimes — including sexually assaulting young boys and girls

over a period of several years beginning in the early 1990s.

Dan Burgess — who has performed as Elvis Presley for more than 25 years — also faces child-pornography charges.

Ottawa police say they obtained a warrant and searched the 54-year-old's home in the

city's east end, where they seized several computer hard drives.

Burgess' family say they are shocked by the charges.

"I'm going through hell and I do not want to talk to anybody," said Burgess' wife, Suzanne.



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## HEALTH

## Heat helps spread of Zika virus

In its brief lifespan, the mosquito that carries the Zika virus is caught in a race: Will it pass the disease to humans before it dies?

Weather might make the difference. Scientists say the hotter it gets, the more likely the insect can spread disease.

"With higher temperatures you have more mosquitoes feeding more frequently and having a greater chance of acquiring infection. And then the virus replicates faster because it's hotter, therefore the mosquitoes can transmit earlier in their life," said entomologist Bill Reisen of the University of California Davis.

In general, mosquitoes don't live long, maybe 10 to 12 days on average, said Tom Scott, a University of California Davis professor of both entomology and epidemiology.

Warmer air incubates the virus faster in the cold-blooded mosquito. So the insect has more time to be infectious and alive to spread the disease, Scott said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## + BLOOD DONORS

The agency responsible for most of Canada's blood supply says people who have travelled outside of Canada, the continental United States and Europe will be ineligible to give blood for 21 days after their return.

Canadian Blood Services says it is implementing the waiting period to mitigate the risk of the Zika virus entering the Canadian blood supply. CBS says the new waiting period is being implemented across the country and will take full effect in all of its clinics starting on Feb. 5.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



## MIGRANTS 'THIS, ABOVE ALL, TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE'

The words from Shakespeare's Hamlet rang out on the most unlikely stage on Wednesday — a squalid migrant camp in the northern French port of Calais, known locally as the "jungle." The audience of migrants from the Middle East to Africa would almost certainly have preferred to see London's renowned Globe theatre company perform the Bard's famous play in his native country on the other side of the English Channel. Yet, up to 300 people bundled against the cold wind to watch the outdoor show on a wooden stage beside the small Good Chance theatre, set up last fall to help fill the void for the displaced camp residents of the sprawling camp. THIBAUT CAMUS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

# Afghan insurgents kill 10-year-old child soldier

## MIDDLE EAST

## Boy had fought against the Taliban with militia

A 10-year-old Afghan boy who was declared a hero after fighting the Taliban has been shot dead by insurgents while on his way to school, officials said Wednesday.

Wasil Ahmad, who had fought the Taliban alongside his uncle on many occasions, was killed Monday near his home in Tirin Kot, the capital of the southern

Uruzgan province, said deputy police Chief Rahimullah Khan.

The 10-year-old boy had been a local celebrity of sorts, with widely circulated photographs on social media showing him holding an automatic weapon and wearing a uniform and helmet.

Ahmad's uncle was a former Taliban commander who changed allegiance to the government and was appointed local police commander in Khas Uruzgan district, Khan said.

The use of child soldiers is illegal in Afghanistan, but the charity Child Soldiers International said both government forces and insurgents have been recruiting minors for years.



Wasil Ahmad TWITTER.COM

The organization's policy and advocacy director Charu Lata Hogg told The Associated Press that the Afghan government, despite pledging to stop the re-

cruitment and use of children by the Afghan security forces, was making "slow and tardy progress."

"There is a lack of political will to address this issue, and while it's within the framework of overall human rights violations, there is a specific commitment by the government to clean it up but sufficient measures are not being taken," she said.

In a June 2015 report presented to the UN Security Council's working group on children and armed conflict, the London-based charity said children were recruited by the Afghan National Police and the Afghan Local Police. It said the recruitment

was mainly driven by poverty, but also filial duty, patriotism and honour.

Rafullah Baidar, spokesman for the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, said that local police had hailed the boy as a hero after he battled a Taliban siege following the death of his father.

"One side made him famous and the other side killed him — both sides ignored the law and acted illegally," Baidar said.

Afghanistan ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1994, committing the country to end the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Weeknights at 6 Hannah counts down the HOTTEST songs of the day.

**TO SIX@6 LAST NIGHT:**

- Justin Bieber Love Yourself
- Flo Rida My House
- Belly ft The Weeknd Might Not
- Travis Scott Antidote
- Twenty One Pilots Stressed Out
- The Chainsmokers ft Rozes Roses

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## SPACE

## Cosmonauts collect experiment, send USB flash drive back to Earth



Russian cosmonauts install new experiments on the International Space Station.

NASA VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Spacewalking Russians gathered seeds and spores that have been stuck outside the International Space Station for months, if not years, and gave a ceremonial send-off Wednesday to a flash drive containing special messages for their motherland.

Cosmonaut Sergey Volkov waited for good camera views before tossing the flash drive overboard toward Earth as the space station sailed 402 kilometres above the Pacific.

The flash drive includes vid-

eos and messages pertaining to the 70th anniversary of Russia's Victory Day last year. It was attached to a small bundle stuffed with towels to provide some bulk.

With that accomplished, the spacewalkers set off to retrieve research equipment that has been outdoors since 2009. The trays include plant seeds as well as spores from fungi and bacteria; the specimens typically were replenished every year or two and returned to Earth for analysis. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## JAPAN

## Canadian navy personnel, civilian face drug charges

The Canadian navy says two members of a warship have been charged with drug offences by Japanese police. The charges follow a port visit to Tokyo by HMCS Winnipeg, a Halifax-class frigate with a crew of about 250. The navy says in a release that police detained two military members and a civilian employee on Monday for the alleged use of a controlled substance. The Canadian Armed Forces has a zero-tolerance drug policy. THE CANADIAN PRESS



# Lowe's offers \$3.2B for Rona

## HOME IMPROVEMENT

### Acquisition gives U.S. giant a strong base in Quebec

Following a long and sometimes stormy courtship, Lowe's Companies Inc. announced Wednesday that it has a deal to buy Quebec-based Rona Inc. for \$3.2 billion, creating the largest home improvement retailer in Canada.

The agreement provides for an all-cash purchase price of \$24 per common share and \$20 per preferred share (all figures in Canadian dollars).

The offer represents a premium of 104 per cent to Rona's closing common share price yesterday, and a 38 per cent premium to its 52-week trading high \$17.36.

As part of the agreement, Lowe's agreed to headquarter the Canadian businesses in Boucherville, Que., maintain Rona's many retail store banners, and enhance distribution services to independent dealers.



Rona Inc. will keep its retail store banners as part of the agreement with Lowe's which has also agreed to headquarter the Canadian businesses in Quebec. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

It also agreed to allow Rona to continue to employ the vast majority of its current employees and maintain key executives from Rona's leadership team and to continue Rona's local and ethical procurement strategy and potentially expand relationships that both Lowe's

and Rona have developed with Canadian manufacturers and suppliers.

The value of Rona shares shot up more than \$11 on the news, to \$23.41, an increase of nearly 100 per cent.

And while Parti Québécois party leader Pierre Karl Péladeau immediately took to Twitter calling on the province to save Rona from foreign ownership, it seems unlikely that political interference will scuttle the deal, as it did in 2012. That unsolicited attempt stalled after Quebec's then-finance minister, Raymond Bachand,

opposed the deal. The transaction has been unanimously approved by the boards of directors of Lowe's and Rona and is supported by the management teams of both companies. The Canadian operations will be headed by Sylvain Prud'homme, president of Lowe's Canada. Rona was founded in 1939 and is seen in Quebec as an integral part of the province's history and economy, and a proud symbol of Quebec entrepreneurialism.

## 100%

The percentage by which the value of Rona shares shot up on news of the takeover, rising more than \$11 to \$23.41.

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Rona was founded in 1939 and is seen in Quebec as an integral part of the province's history and economy, and a proud symbol of Quebec entrepreneurialism.

The acquisition accelerates Lowe's growth strategy in Canada, giving it a strong base in Quebec under a recognized brand. Rona has close to 500 stores while Lowe's has fewer than 50 in Canada.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

## AUTOMOTIVE

### Toyota gives up on Scion

Toyota is killing its Scion brand after years of slumping sales.

Beginning in August, 2017 model-year Scion vehicles will be rebadged as Toyotas. The FR-S sports car, iA sedan and iM five-door hatchback, as well as the C-HR, which recently debuted at the L.A. Auto Show, will be a part of the Toyota line-up. The tC will have a final release series edition and end production in August, according to Toyota Motor Corp.

Scion was formed in 2003 to attract younger buyers. It was known for its funky designs, like the boxy xB, and was the brand Toyota used when it wanted to experiment with new kinds of marketing or no-haggle pricing.

But there were multiple problems. The millennials that the Scion was aiming for held back on big acquisitions during the recession, and when they did buy, they were just as happy to buy Toyotas. Scion's small, oddball lineup never connected with buyers and they were a bit more expensive.

At the brand's height, in 2006, sales of all Scion models combined reached just over 173,000. Sales stood at 56,167 in 2015.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Scion brand was formed in 2003 to attract younger buyers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

## market minute

	<b>DOLLAR</b>
	72.61¢ (+1.32¢)
	<b>TSX</b>
	12,593.02 (+150.76)
	<b>OIL</b>
	\$32.28 US (+\$2.40)
	<b>GOLD</b>
	\$1,141.30 US (+\$14.10)

**NATURAL GAS:** \$2.038 US (+1.3¢)  
**DOW JONES:** 16,336.66 (+183.12)

## SHOPPING

### Canadians turning away from cash: Study

Canadian consumers are more inclined to reach for their smartphones and credit cards over bills and coins to make purchases, according to a new study.

In 2015, only 25 per cent of Canadian transactions were in cash, a decline of two percent-

age points from 2014. Meanwhile, credit cards accounted for the majority of transactions at 42 per cent, unchanged from the previous year.

"We also saw a number of years ago in this country a very concerted effort by the card companies to get people

to start using their cards for smaller payments. That clearly has worked," said Stephen Popeil, vice-president of GfK Canada which conducted the online survey.

Debit cards were at 28 per cent, followed by mobile device payments at three per cent.

Each category saw marginal growth of a percentage point each compared to 2014.

In the case of mobile payments, GfK found that they tend to skew to younger and higher-income Canadians, as well as among urban dwellers.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



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## ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

### The media is two-faced when it comes to sexual assault

If you are sexually assaulted, you can have your day in the media, and then have your day in court.

But if you want a conviction, your first call should probably be to a lawyer.

Watching the first two days of Jian Ghomeshi's trial, which resumes today, it seems the press will work against you in the court.

Marie Henein, Ghomeshi's lawyer, made hay from every detail in every statement the first witness made — in four media interviews and to police — that did not line up, just so, with her chief testimony in court on Monday.

It's not clear what the inscrutable Justice William Horvath thought, but to the gallery it appeared as if Henein, while never explicitly challenging that Ghomeshi punched the woman in the head three times, systematically shredded her credibility.

At this point, avoiding the courts, as many of Ghomeshi's accusers have, seems the more judicious move.

Not only have they had their stories heard by the country, they got results. Ghomeshi lost his job. The CBC endured a scathing inquiry into management's culpability in a caustic work environment at Q, Ghomeshi's show. Ontario launched a high-profile, \$41-million anti-sexual-assault campaign.

It's a rare reckoning that

only happens if you have a Ghomeshi-calibre celebrity as your alleged abuser. And even then — people who sexually assault people should be convicted. Ironically, media interviews can undermine that.

"It's not that you're set up to fail," Jacob Jesin, the witness's lawyer, told me yesterday. "It's that every statement you make, outside of being in your lawyer's offices, is fodder for cross-examinations."

It seems highly likely that anyone telling a story would alter some aspects along the way, but in court, there is little room for memory's foibles or the slow recollection of details, like whether the witness was wearing hair extensions. Pile up enough seemingly small deviations, and the story begins to take on water. In fact, the best way to seem reliable on the witness stand seems to be to actually have a script and, to use Jesin's words, "Stick to it."

Not only have the witness's comments to the media given the defence ample ammunition, but the press — a sympathetic listener when the witness first came forward — will tell your difficult story and also print your bikini shot.

Today is expected to start with a request from members of the media to publish the bikini photo the witness sent Ghomeshi in 2004. Their "public interest" cuts both ways.

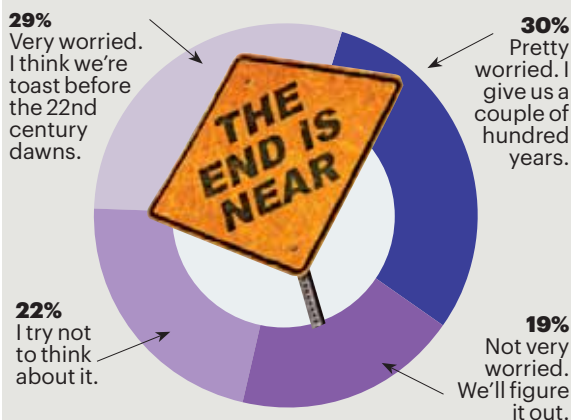
#### Metro POLL

### Apocalypse how?

Visit [metronews.ca](http://metronews.ca) to have your say.

**Our days on this planet** are numbered, experts say. The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists announced this week that the minute hand on the metaphorical "Doomsday Clock" remained at 11:57, a dire reading that previously hadn't been seen since the 1980s. Rising tension between Russia and the U.S., North Korea's recent belligerence and a lack of aggressive steps to address climate change have moved the needle so close to midnight, which symbolizes the apocalypse. We asked our readers what they think is going to finish us off.

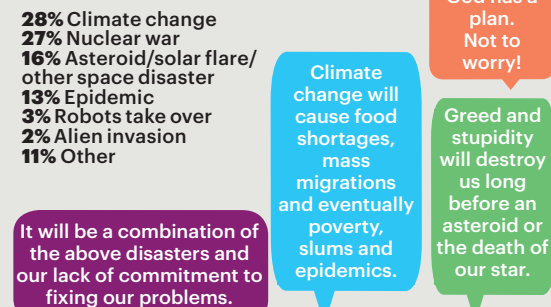
#### 1 How worried do you feel about the future of humanity?



#### 2 How prepared are you for a major disaster?



#### 3 How do you think the world (or at least our species) will end?



WE ASKED Metro readers

## What it feels like to get kudos from your hero



**Michael Coren**  
For Metro

I have a new book out in April. Epiphany: A Christian's Change of Heart and Mind over Same-Sex Marriage. It explains what happened to me when I did indeed change my opinion, and then outlines the Christian and secular case for equal marriage.

Part of modern authorship is not only writing but also promoting a book. Blurbs are important. I'd received them from the chancellor of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, Oxford historian Sir Diarmaid MacCulloch and several others, but my publishers, Random House, wondered if we could "find a celebrity."

So, I needed someone

famous who was also highly intelligent and deeply concerned about gay issues and social justice. The person who came to mind was someone I respect more than anybody else currently writing and broadcasting: Stephen Fry.

He has more than 12 million Twitter followers, his books are international bestsellers, his popularity and audience almost beyond compare. Which is why he would be impossible to reach and not interested in someone like me.

I wrote to a friend in Britain who knows him a little. "Here's an old email

address. Not even sure if it's current." I send off some recent columns and wait for the sound of silence.

**Part of modern authorship is not only writing but also promoting a book. Blurbs are important. My publishers wondered if we could 'find a celebrity.'**

A Tuesday morning. Still half-asleep, I turn to my phone to read the night's emails. Stephen Fry. He's not only replied but wants to see the manuscript. Not a hoax; it's him. I tell those closest to me, send him the manuscript and then assume it's the last I will hear.

Two weeks later comes a long, thoughtful letter and, "Michael Coren's Epiphany is a wonderfully revealing

read — an epiphany in itself. I urge anyone interested in the conjunction of faith and free-thought to read this engrossing and fascinating book."

So how does one react when a hero offers such support? Overwhelming joy of course, wrapped in emotional gratitude, layered with a calming sense of genuine achievement.

Something else too. It makes all of the hateful and homophobic emails, tweets and comments from the past 18 months seem so trivial. It will of course help the book enormously and bring it to a large audience, but most of all, it helps me.

Thank you Stephen, thank you.

**Michael Coren** is an author and broadcaster in Toronto. Follow him @michaelcoren.

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While almost 80 per cent of Canadians drink, many are unaware of the health risks associated with alcohol consumption, says country's chief public health officer Dr. Gregory Taylor.

# Martel on faith, love and iPhones

## BOOKS

### Living with loss in The High Mountains of Portugal

**Melita Kuburas**  
Metro | Canada



When bad things happen in life, how do we react? To whom do we turn for help?

In his new book *The High Mountains of Portugal*, Yann Martel dissects moments of human suffering post-tragedy — not to explore how his characters overcome, or succumb to, their loss, but to find out how they *live* with it?

"I wanted to start with people who have lost something very, very precious, and where they go from there," Martel says. "When it gets bad — what do you do, what do you reach for?"

First we meet Tomás who, one by one, within the span of a week, loses his son, his lover, his father. His heart unravels. He tries to protect himself from further assault by walking in reverse; facing the elements with the toughness of his back. He then sets off in search of a treasure hidden in a village church, located in Portugal's mountain range, not on foot but driving his rich uncle's car — a new technology in the early 1900s, one that he hates and doesn't really know how to use.

In the book's Part 2, we meet Euse-

bio Lozora, a pathologist who gets a strange visit from a widow on New Year's 1939. She wants an autopsy, but not to find out how her husband died. "I want to know how he lived," she insists.

More than 40 years later, in the book's Part 3, Canadian senator Peter Tovy is frustrated with his broken family and becomes enamoured with an ape at a chimpanzee sanctuary in Oklahoma. He buys Odo and goes with his new gargantuan pet (nay, friend) to live in the same village in Portugal, Tuizelo, which connects all three stories.

Much like the plucky teenage protagonist in *Life of Pi*, Martel's Booker Prize-winning bestseller, the grieving characters in *High Mountains* find solace in what the author describes as a "curious phenomenon called faith."

It's a subject Martel is intrigued by, even though it's become unusual in many social circles to talk about God and religion in any way that's not underlined with cynicism.

## BIBLIOTHERAPY

**In 2007, Yann Martel began sending Stephen Harper books he thought the then-prime minister should read. What would he send to Justin Trudeau?**

"I did that to Harper because I thought he needed betterment. I saw a man who had a dried up narrow vision — profoundly divisive, profoundly destructive. I don't see that in Trudeau."

"We live in a time that's very inhospitable to other-dimensional talk," he says. "It's against the ethos of our times to believe in airy-fairy things called gods."

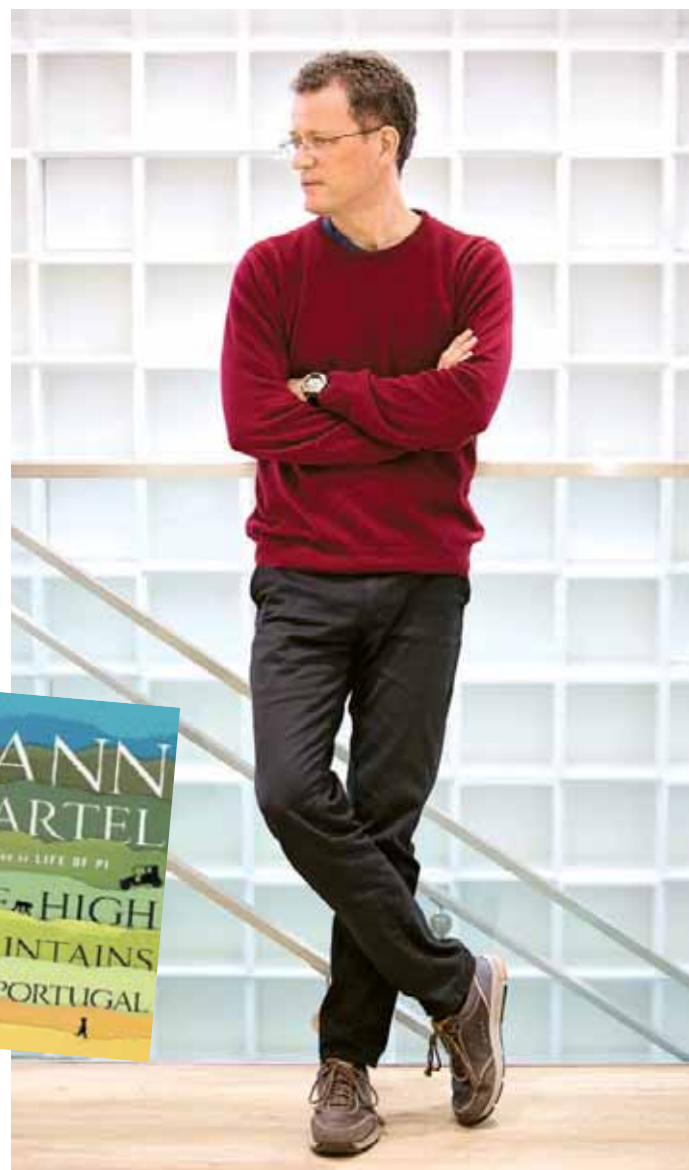
It's easier to talk about things that are tangible, that can be explained. Technology, for instance, which the author speaks about favourably though he has his misgivings, perhaps in the same way the villagers in *High Mountains* are suspicious of Tomás's automobile.

His iPhone, Martel says, allows him to Facetime with his wife and children currently away in England, communicating across the Atlantic, for free. But the device is only useful if you have someone to talk to. In the end, technology is not going to save anyone from the inevitable.

"The person who believes in nothing but a chemical, material reality, confronted with suffering, has very few tools to deal with that," he says.

"A lot of stuff we derive through our senses. Faith goes beyond that, you know — why you fall in love with one person or one hockey team... there's no real sense to it. Why I love India and am indifferent to another country; why I like Italian food and less so Chinese food — there's no logic to that. But that's who I am."

In other words, when we let go of our rationality, we open the door for magic.



Just this week, Yann Martel released his new book, *The High Mountains of Portugal*. He will tour across Canada in March. LIZ BEDDALL/METRO CANADA

## GRAPHIC NOVEL

# Exploring partners' past loves

**Sue Carter**  
For Metro Canada



Years ago, Leanne Shapton was hanging out at her boyfriend's when she noticed he still had photos of his ex-girlfriend in the apartment.

It's an uncomfortable scenario that would make anyone jealous or even suspicious, but the New York-based author-illustrator turned those dark emotions into *Was She Pretty?*, a graphic novel that explores the natural impulse

to seek out the personal details of those who came before us in our relationships. Published 10 years ago, the book is now available in paperback for the first time with the venerable comics publisher, Drawn & Quarterly.

"I was fascinated by other's people's experiences and what they did when they confronted their own jealousy," Shapton recalls. Using her friends' and her own experiences — plus many she imagined or were inspired by vintage photos — Shapton drew a series of pen-and-ink portraits of former lovers, accompanied by

captions such as "Jacob's parents adored his ex-girlfriend Cynthia" and "Shane's ex-girlfriend was a child prodigy."

"Jealousy is a bad feeling, and yet I didn't want to say, 'Here's how you get over it.' It's definitely not a self-help book. It's a wallowing book, if anything," Shapton says.

A decade ago when *Was She Pretty?* first came out, Twitter was in its infancy and Instagram hadn't been invented. While Shapton's book doesn't deal with how social media is a tool used to cyber-stalk exes, she acknow-



Leanne Shapton fleshes out partners' past relationships, both real and imagined. CONTRIBUTED

ledges it's affected how we perceive ourselves and others.

"I think that makes for your imagination about what you don't know about people to get

even more inflamed and to grow even more," she says. "The book is much more about the assumption that people come and go in your lives."

Other than a new cover design and the ink colour, the contents of *Was She Pretty?* have not been altered. Shapton, on the other hand, has observed changes in her own attitude toward the green-eyed monster.

Growing up in Toronto, Shapton was a competitive swimmer, an experience she chronicled in her 2012 illustrated book *Swimming Studies*.

"Ten years out, my competitive streak has blunted, so it's fun to look back at this more competitive version of myself," she says. "I'm a much less jealous person because of all the experience I have now. But it's still such a fresh thing. It can flare up, like a rash."



# Love, murder, intrigue make good television



Ben Whishaw plays a young Londoner trying to solve the mystery of his lover's murder. HANDOUT

## INTERVIEW

### British writer uses plot twists and slow reveals in London Spy

**Ned Ehrbar**  
Metro | Hollywood



British writer Tom Rob Smith makes his first foray into writing for television with the twisting, mysterious London Spy, about a young Londoner named Danny (Ben Whishaw), who meets Alex,

a reserved math genius. The two become lovers, then Alex disappears and Danny discovers he was a spy — and Danny is being framed for his murder. Danny's ensuing hunt for the truth leads to British intelligence giant MI6.

**Your first work, *Child 44*, was a novel adapted into a movie. How did making a TV series change your approach?**

With the novel it was just a case of you believe in it, you go away and you write it and then you find a world for it. And this was kind of similar. I didn't have any TV experience, I hadn't written an

original drama before, but I knew that I wanted to tell the story and I knew it was TV. I knew it wasn't film, and I also knew it wasn't a book. It's like first-person narrative through the eyes of the main character, played by Ben Whishaw.

**What were your ways into tackling the process of writing for TV?**

With the first episode, there was a lot of debate about pace. One of the things I love about TV is you have more time. The conventional story — your partner is murdered and you take on the question of who murdered them — has been

told countless times. With this, we have enough time to work out what their love story is as a particular love story without it being a shorthand. Let's spend a bit of time with these two people. Love stories aren't all the same — we fall in love for completely different reasons. I wanted to understand that these two people were both lost for very different reasons. You have someone who's very hedonistic and then you have someone who's deeply closeted, locked into a world of people who are dark and dangerous. In London, those two worlds stare at each other.

## JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING



The American Idol judges have found an engaging banter in their final season of the show. CONTRIBUTED

### American Idol's final act is full of beauty

**THE SHOW:** American Idol, Season 15  
**THE MOMENT:** The Final Auditions

Crackling with craziness, a young woman bounds into the audition room and announces to judges Jennifer Lopez, Harry Connick Jr. and Keith Urban, "I'm 23 years old and I'm a singing nomad."

Lopez, who moves through life looking permanently airbrushed, says, "I could never do that."

"You couldn't sleep outside?" Connick asks her. "You could build a shelter out of your assistants."

"That would work," Lopez replies (she knows who she is).

The crackling girl, who can't sing, looks bewildered. The judges dismiss her. But nicely.

The awareness that this is American Idol's final season has reinvigorated everyone.

The contestants are fresher.

The panellists, nestled in their niches — Urban feels the music, Lopez is the mama (sweet and stern), and Connick is both cut-up and musical sophisticate — have found an engaging banter.

AI has always been about hope, kids from nowhere dreaming of stepping through a magic door into a bigger, better life.

In the Simon Cowell years, there were two ways that hope could go: terrible singers were mocked for their delusion while credible candidates were moved along in a hard-nosed manner until their story had been exploited fully.

Thankfully, the show has melted as it's matured.

The current judges are as much about making music as they are about selling it. They're attuned to the place songs hold in people's lives.

When they talk about connecting to a song, and connecting through a song, they mean it. They're looking for that lump in the throat. And that makes great TV.

American Idol airs Wednesdays 8 p.m. on Yes TV and Fox.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

# Love, Metro

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MEET THE CONDO

# Suite living on Quinpool Road



## Project overview

The Keep is an eight-storey mixed-use commercial/residential condo building on vibrant Quinpool Road. The floor plans are designed to maximize space, light, views of the city and luxurious living. There are also three live-work townhouses with private rooftop terraces.



## Housing Amenities

This is a 74-unit building with ground-floor commercial space, three rooftop terraces, a common area, party room and gym. There's also underground parking

## Location and transit

It's the ideal central location at the corner of Quinpool Road and Vernon Street, with everything downtown Halifax has to offer, all right there: shopping, eateries, nightlife, and more. There are always buses on Quinpool Road to get you where you want to go.

**CORRECTION:** In last week's Meet the Condo an incorrect phone number was provided for the King's Wharf development. The correct number is 902-455-4555.

## In the neighbourhood

Quinpool Road has great amenities, groceries, pharmacy, NSLC, multiple restaurants, and every major bank. Plus it's within easy walking distance of QEII Health Sciences Centre, Dalhousie University and the Halifax Common.

## + NEED TO KNOW

**What:** The Keep  
**Developer:** Doug Reid  
**Builder:** J.W. Lindsay Construction  
**Location:** Quinpool Road and Vernon Street  
**Units:** One- and two-bedroom and two-bedroom plus den. Three live-work townhouses have commercial ground floor space.  
**Pricing:** Pre-construction pricing (almost expired)

starting at \$329,900 with parking.  
**Status:** Demolition has begun at site, multiple units have been reserved already  
**Occupancy:** Spring 2018  
**Sales centre:** 6009 Quinpool Rd., Suite 100  
**Info:** Call James Higgs 902-830-6749 or Aaron Ewer 902-209-5251 at Parachute Realty. thekeephalifax.ca

INTERIORS

# Missoni Home presents floral fabrics at Paris Déco Off

High-end Italian fashion house Missoni presented its new collection of fabrics this week at Paris Déco Off, a design showcase that takes visitors around brand showrooms in the French capital.

With Rosita Missoni at the helm of Missoni Home, it's no surprise to see her love of colour channeled in these vibrant new fabrics.

### Oriental Garden

One of six fabric collections presented, Oriental Garden is based on a pattern from a silk cape, known as Saturno, designed by Missoni in 1971.

Missoni Home reclaimed the pattern for its 2016 textile collection, with bold flowering

branches blooming in different designs, including a macro print on cotton with a checkerboard of matte and shiny finishes, and micro embroidery on satin fabric. Two sets are available, with turquoise, amethyst, slate and onyx on a sandy coloured background, or coral, rosewood and shades of amethyst and sage on a turquoise background.

**Missoni Home's Floral Galaxy pattern, right, was inspired by a flower-filled English garden.**



### Anemone

Anemone is a flagship line this season for Missoni.

Inspired by the flower of the same name, it juxtaposes large and small flowers in shades of blue and green against black and white blooms.

Black and white appear again in the Anemones Dream fabric, alongside touches of pink, yellow and purple.

### Fireworks

Fireworks uses a rainbow design, which along with

chevrons is a hallmark of the Missoni brand. The bright colours are set against a black and white background.

### Tropical Fish

The Tropical Fish line of outdoor fabrics puts colourful fish in a lively print. (Prices on request.) AFP

## + BACKGROUND

Rosita Missoni founded Missoni 60 years ago with her husband, Ottavio.

She left the fashion side of things to her children in 1997 and turned her attention to Missoni Home.



**Anemones Dream is one of six new fabric collections from Missoni Home.** ALL PHOTOS: MISSIONI HOME/HANDOUT



# Wideman believes hefty ban is wide of the mark

NHL

## Flames vet to appeal 20-game suspension for sticking official

The NHL suspended Calgary Flames defenceman Dennis Wideman 20 games on Wednesday for cross-checking a linesman during a game last week, the second-longest suspension in NHL history for abusing an official.

Wideman was suspended for violating the league rule on physical abuse of officials after he struck linesman Don Henderson and knocked him down during the Flames' game against Nashville on Jan. 27.

The NHL Players' Association said in a statement that Wideman is appealing the suspension. "We strongly disagree with the League's decision to suspend Dennis Wideman," the players' union said. "Dennis has played in 11

NHL seasons and almost 800 games without incident. The facts, including the medical evidence presented at the hearing, clearly demonstrate that Dennis had no intention to make contact with the linesman."

The 32-year-old will forfeit \$564,516 in salary as a result of the suspension.

Wideman had a hearing with the NHL's department of hockey operations on Tuesday that included representatives from the Players' Association and NHL Officials Association.

After the game last week, Wideman said he was in pain after a hit from the Predators' Miikka Salomaki and couldn't avoid hitting Henderson. He was not penalized and skated over to the officials and apologized moments later.

"Throughout my career — and I've been around for a few years — I think I've treated every official with the utmost respect,"

Wideman said, "and I would never intentionally try to hit a linesman or



Nashville Predators' players look over the bench at **linesman Don Henderson** after he was hit by **Calgary Flames' Dennis Wideman** in Calgary. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

a ref or anything like that." Wideman has no previous history of on- or off-ice incidents and is known as a player who often avoids penalties. He has just 30 penalty minutes in 48 games this season.

His suspension, which was considered indefinite pending a hearing, began with the Flames' game Wednesday night against the Carolina Hurricanes.

Wideman has two goals and 17 assists this season for Calgary, which is 13th place in the Western Conference.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## NOTABLE BANS IN NHL HISTORY

- Lifetime:** Billy Coutu for assaulting two referees and starting a bench-clearing brawl (April 1927).
- 25 games:** Raffi Torres for an illegal hit to the head of Marian Hossa (April 2012).
- 41 games:** Raffi Torres for an illegal hit to the head of Jakob Silfverberg (October 2015).
- 30 games:** Chris Simon for stomping on the ankle of Jarkko Ruutu (December 2007).
- 25 games:** Jesse Boulerice for cross-checking Ryan Kesler in the face (October 2007).
- 25 games:** Chris Simon for a stick attack to the face of Ryan Hollweg (March 2007). THE CANADIAN PRESS

SUPER BOWL

## Mathis and Coleman rejected en route to the big one

Evan Mathis got released by the Philadelphia Eagles because Chip Kelly didn't want to give the two-time Pro Bowl guard a raise. Kurt Coleman got dumped by Kelly a year earlier.

Things turned out super for both guys. Mathis is blocking for Peyton Manning and the Denver Broncos. Coleman led Carolina with seven interceptions and picked two more passes in the NFC championship game.

As for Kelly, he landed in San Francisco, too — after the Eagles fired him and he became

the 49ers new coach.

"This is the ultimate dream for a football player to be able to play in the Super Bowl," Mathis said. "It's much more valuable (than money)."

Coleman was a seventh-round pick who started 27 games for the Eagles before Kelly arrived in 2013 and made him a backup. The safety played for Kansas City in 2014 and rejuvenated his career with the Panthers.

"I was a guy that was not as fast or may not have been as tall or strong or whatever

it may be," Coleman said. "If you believe it in your heart, you can achieve it."

Both Super Bowl teams have rejects from other clubs playing prominent roles for them. Finding players on the waiver wire has helped the Panthers overcome injuries.

"We watch film and we work at it," Carolina general manager Dave Gettleman said. "Mark Koncz, our pro scouting director, does a terrific job. He's very thorough and a big part of it is finding guys that fit what we do." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Denver's **Evan Mathis** protects Peyton Manning. GETTY IMAGES

## IN BRIEF

### Montreal hockey player awarded \$8 million after being left paralyzed

A Montreal-area hockey player who was 16 when he became quadriplegic after a bodycheck from behind propelled him into the boards has been awarded \$8 million.

One of Andrew Zaccardo's lawyers says the amount handed down by a judge might be a record in such a case in any sport.

Zaccardo has been unable to walk and has had to use a wheelchair since being hit by Ludovic Gauvreau-Beaupre in 2010. THE CANADIAN PRESS

### Jays to install new dirt infield at Rogers Centre

The Toronto Blue Jays' infield is getting an upgrade. The team announced Wednesday it will begin installing a regulation dirt infield at Rogers Centre next week that will be ready for the 2016 regular season.

The work will involve excavation of the cement floor at the stadium in the base path and infield areas to a depth of 30.48 centimetres and will impact an area of approximately 1,115 square metres.

Layers of gravel, sand and clay will be inlaid in the excavated areas to ensure proper conditions suitable to a major-league playing surface.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

### Ex-Super Bowl winner Stabler had brain disease, say university researchers

Former Oakland Raiders quarterback Ken Stabler, the late NFL MVP and Super Bowl winner who is a finalist for the Pro Football Hall of Fame, has been diagnosed with the brain disease CTE, Boston University researchers said Wednesday.

Stabler, who died of colon cancer at 69 in July, had Stage 3 chronic traumatic encephalopathy, Dr. Ann McKee told The Associated Press. McKee said the disease was widespread throughout his brain, with "quite severe" damage to the regions involving learning, memory and regulation of emotion.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



# RECIPE Pasta with Peas and Green Onion



PHOTO: MAMA VISIONE

**Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh**  
For Metro Canada

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- Juice of half a large lemon
- 1 Tbsp chopped fresh mint, plus more for garnish

## Directions

**1.** Bring a large pot of salted water to boil over medium heat. Once boiling, add the pasta and cook 7 to 11 minutes, or until al dente. Drain the pasta and pour into a large bowl.

**2.** Mix pasta with peas, onions and feta. In a small bowl, whisk olive oil, lemon juice and mint. Drizzle dressing over pasta and toss throughout. Sprinkle pasta with another teaspoon of fresh, chopped mint and serve.

## Ready in

Prep time: 15 minutes  
Total time: 30 minutes  
**Serves 4 to 6**

## Ingredients

- 500g rigatoni pasta
- 2 cups fresh or frozen peas, cooked and drained
- 1 1/2 cups crumbled feta cheese
- 1 bunch green onions (about 4), sliced

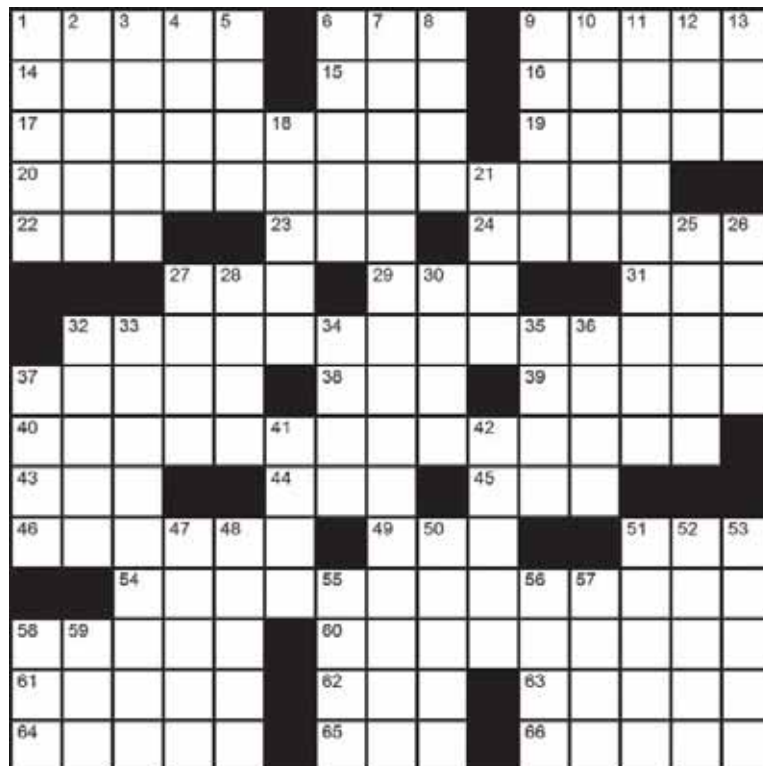
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# CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN

## ACROSS

- Large amounts
- ...la-la
- Mr. Baron Cohen
- Song line
- CD...
- Like some verbs, for short
- As per #32-Across... Bonhomme's grand home in his fantastically frigid kingdom: 2 wds.
- Canadian guitarist Ms. Boyd
- Fast food utensils: 2 wds.
- French seasoning
- Company name abbr.
- Medieval fief holder
- Non-verbal communication syst.
- Be in debt
- "...I... cut myself!" (Veggie chopper's cry)
- Annual event since 1955 currently underway in Quebec City: 2 wds.
- Breadcrumbs of Japan
- "O" of OLP
- Had that burger: 2 wds.
- Hit for Joe Cocker that goes "Baby let me be / 'Cause you don't care...": 3 wds.
- "Not impressed."
- "Yuck!"
- Hardy animal
- A... (Theoretical thinking)
- Big Apple news-



paper [acronym]  
51. Help  
54. According to the bio of Bonhomme (the mascot of #32-Across), it's his dream to eliminate this in the world: 2 wds.  
58. Celebrity chef Ms. De Laurentiis

60. Emotionally cleansing  
61. "When does ... lighter out again?" (Hoping-for-Spring query)  
62. Dernier... (Latest fashion)  
63. Metamorphosis-izer

64. Shrek's beloved  
65. Mr. Cobb, and others  
66. Hamilton = ... City

## DOWN

- Undergarments worn with dresses
- Recurring pro-

cess  
3. Expanse-related  
4. Plunges  
5. "Vamoosel!"  
6. Stretch of land  
7. "The Last Waltz" (1978) directed by Martin Scorsese and starring The Band: 2 wds.  
8. "Indeed!"  
9. Region's forest trees  
10. Ram's sign  
11. ... artists (Singers such as Taylor Swift)  
12. Farm bird  
13. Palindromic honorific  
18. City in northern France  
21. Folkie band, Bon...  
25. Anticipate  
26. Lively tune  
27. Ancient Egyptian cross  
28. Ancient colonnade  
30. Cautious  
32. Decliner  
33. Visiting the Windy City: 2 wds.  
34. Rice-A-...  
35. Scot's negatives  
36. "Take ... a sign."  
37. Shoe style  
41. "Correct me ... wrong, but..."  
42. Submarine entrance  
47. ... days  
48. Lasso  
50. Abominable snowmen  
51. Cavern  
52. "Okay, ... up already, what's the answer?"  
53. Sticker  
55. Bank ...  
56. Mr. Holbrook's  
57. Smell ... (Be suspicious)  
58. Picture file extension  
59. "Lord, is ...?" (Last Supper question)

# IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

**Aries** March 21 - April 20  
They say opposites attract and someone who's as different from you as possible will get your pulse racing. You'll recover your senses quickly, but it could be the love of your life.

**Taurus** April 21 - May 21  
Stick to tried and trusted ways, even if some may say it's old-fashioned. Not everything old is wrong and at least you get things done, which is more than can be said for some!

**Gemini** May 22 - June 21  
Don't worry if you find yourself in a minority of one. Being the kind of person who stands out from the crowd, it is inevitable that you will be criticized by those who would prefer everyone to think and act alike.

**Cancer** June 22 - July 23  
Someone needs your support and a shoulder to cry on. Do what you can to assist them. It may be emotionally draining but you have been through this kind of scene many times before.

**Leo** July 24 - Aug. 23  
You are in a restless mood, unable to get comfortable in any one place. Why should that be a problem? Why should you stay still? Be adventurous. Boredom is to be avoided.

**Virgo** Aug. 24 - Sept. 23  
Why can't some people see sense? You will have to deal with someone whose grasp of logic is non-existent. Make your point, then get away from them as quickly as you can. You're under no obligation to stay.

**Libra** Sept. 24 - Oct. 23  
It may be hard to think straight today but it's essential if you don't want to get caught up in a big scene. You can't stop others from ranting and raving but you don't have to join in.

**Scorpio** Oct. 24 - Nov. 22  
You may be tempted to hit back at someone who's giving you a hard time but is it a good idea? They may just be waiting for an excuse to start an open fight.

**Sagittarius** Nov. 23 - Dec. 21  
Someone you thought was a friend will show their true colours and try to convert you to their way of thinking. Let them know that in future they must only give their opinions when asked — in other words, never!

**Capricorn** Dec. 22 - Jan. 20  
Someone in a position of authority will get a bit emotional today. Do what you can to calm them down. Not only will they appreciate your advice but they will mark you down as someone who can be trusted.

**Aquarius** Jan. 21 - Feb. 19  
You will have fun today but you may feel guilty because not everyone is as happy or fortunate as you. Help others get over whatever it is that is bothering them but don't let their mood bring you down.

**Pisces** Feb. 20 - March 20  
Negative feelings may be natural but don't let them take over your life. Confront whatever it is that pains you today.

## CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9



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